



Educational Advocacy

a Pathlight program

SUPPORT

RESOURCES

INFORMATION

Autism Connections' goal is to guide you through the IEP and Special Education process while developing your skills and capacity as an advocate.



Educational Advocacy Services

Autism Connections is pleased to offer our Educational Advocacy Services. Having a child with autism comes with the responsibility of making sure he or she is receiving appropriate services and necessary supports. Navigating the special education maze can at first seem overwhelming to some parents. Autism Connections provides services to make this process easier by teaching parents about their child's rights under Special Education Law while parents gain a better understanding of their child's educational needs. Educational advocacy is not a one time event, but rather a process that continues throughout your child's school career. Our goal is to guide you through the IEP and Special Education process while focusing on developing your skills and capacity as an advocate for your child.

* Free Services

Information and Referral

Answer generalized questions regarding your child's educational needs.

Workshops and Trainings

Small and large group workshops on various topics surrounding Special Education Law and Advocacy Strategies.

* Educational Advocacy

Autism Connections has an Educational Advocate on staff who is experienced in supporting families in their advocacy efforts within the school system. Our advocate works with families to help them understand the Special Education law and guide them through the process with the goal on ensuring their child's needs are being met. Working closely with families, our advocate can help provide the tools needed to build knowledge and confidence to engage as an effective member of the educational team.

* Services with Fees

The following services are available when you contract with our Educational Advocate. Please contact us with questions about the process.

Note to Parents

It is important to acknowledge that while the information we share with parents is based on Special Education Law, we are not attorneys and do not provide legal advice. However, we are able to collaborate with your attorney.

Face to Face Consultation

Meet with our Educational Advocate to address your specific educational advocacy questions and concerns.

IEP Assessment and Review

Learn more about your child’s Individual Education Program (IEP) and whether his or her needs are being met. Our Educational Advocate will review your child’s IEP and current assessment, and provide a written summary of recommended next steps.

Navigation

Work closely with an Educational Advocate to become a more effective advocate. Learn about Special Education Law and your child’s rights under IDEA.

Tools

Throughout the process, an Educational Advocate will ensure your understanding of services and resources to benefit your child and how to access them.

Attend IEP & other Team Meetings

An Educational Advocate will attend your IEP or Team Meeting; supporting you and your child throughout the



About Autism Connections

Autism Connections was founded in 1989 by parents of children with autism. Our goal is to help families, schools, professionals, agencies, and communities understand autism, promote the well-being of individuals with autism, and foster their inclusion in the community.

We help families build on their strengths, work together to create a positive vision for the future, and help children learn, grow, and be welcomed, fully included members of their communities.

Autism Connections is directed by parents and other family members in partnership with autism professionals and other concerned community members.

Contact Us

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For Service Fees

The hourly fee is \$55.
Scholarships are available upon request for those who qualify.

Contact Us

for more information, fees, or to schedule an appointment with an Educational Advocate.

About Pathlight

Autism Connections is a Pathlight program

Pathlight is a 501(c)3 non-profit Massachusetts corporation with offices in Pittsfield, Springfield, Greenfield, Easthampton, and Hadley. It was founded in 1952 by five mothers of children with developmental disabilities.

The majority of Pathlight’s revenue comes through state agencies, including the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services and the Massachusetts Department of Medical Assistance. Pathlight also raises money from a broad network of generous donors. We gratefully accept support from individuals, businesses, and foundations.